

A Briefly Attired Mission

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One evening, Jimmy and I got back late from a resupply mission and went to the showers on the edge of our company area. We always just disrobed, wrapped a towel around us, slipped on shower shoes, grabbed our toilet bag and walked down to the showers. In the middle of our showers, our base camp came under rocket and mortar attack. We briefly discussed our course of action and decided that it was closer to the flight line than back to our bunker in the company area and that we would go get a Huey and launch.

We untied the first Huey we got to, grabbed the gunner and crew chief's helmets and quickly launched. We flew around trying to find the source of the rocket launches and found them coming from the Michelin rubber plantation about three miles to the west of base camp. We called in the location of the position and directed artillery on it.

When we ran low on fuel, we called on our company operations frequency and explained our uniform status, (towels) which they thought was hilarious! We asked for the crew chief and gunner to meet us at the refueling area and to bring some more appropriate clothing with them.

We refueled, got the gunner and crew chief aboard and alternately put on the olive drab T-shirts and boxer shorts they brought with them. They explained that was all our fellow aviators had sent.

Since we now had the capability of putting fire on the gooks, we went back to the plantation and had the gunner and crew chief hose down the area where we spotted the launch tubes. By this time it was getting light and by the lack of activity, everyone agreed that the position had been silenced so we asked for and received permission to return to base camp.

When we finished our approach and were hovering to the revetment area we were directed to, hover up to the hot spot and shut down. Since we weren't very well dressed we declined but were told by our company commander that General Stone, the 4th Division commander was there with his staff to congratulate us on a superb mission, shake our hands and have pictures made. Jimmy and I laughed about the implications but hovered to the hot spot, (VIP pad) and shut down. The look on everyone's face was pure astonishment as we exited the Huey and stood in front of it at attention wearing our olive green towels, skivvies and a smile. General Stone never showed a sign that anything was out of the ordinary and returned our salutes and shook our hands. Pictures were made but we never got copies for some reason and a commendation was never mentioned.

Since we weren't on the flight schedule for the day, we opened the officers club and with the help of our crew chief and gunner were pretty well crippled by 9:00 in the morning.